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A HAND-BOOK

— ON —

SABBATH SCHOOL WORK.

INTRODUCTORY.

Wise treatment at the beginning vastly important.—Illustration: Plants under culture—under neglect.—So of childhood.—God's purposes regarding children.—Scripture.—The need of training for service in the Mission fields.—Training should be well done.—Assembly desires a Hand-Book.—Why the teaching of doctrines is not treated in this Hand-Book.

As in the natural so in the moral and spiritual world, much depends upon BEGINNINGS, upon the wise treatment and development of that from which we seek satisfactory and abiding results.

In dealing with the vegetable kingdom, the natures of the seed, the soil and the climate are carefully considered before the cultivation of a plant is attempted. When the plant appears, its growth is watched and directed with patient care and skill in proportion to its value in the future. There must be protection from enemies, grafting, pruning, shelter, enriching of soil, transplanting, development under gradual exposure, and every other appliance that a full knowledge of its nature and possibilities suggest for its highest development. In due time the fruit appears in perfection and abundance to reward the toil and faith of the husbandman. Impatient, unskilful hands could secure no such results.

This parable of nature shows God's plan of development in His Church. He intends that her children, His tender plants, with almost infinite possibilities of love and service, under gracious influences, shall be studied, sheltered, guided, chastened, nourished, strengthened, developed into perfect men in Christ, full of mercy and good fruits. Without shelter and cultivation the plant could only develop into an unsightly [illegible] of the ground. Much more, a child neglected and exposed to the fierce assaults of evil become vessels of wrath fitted to destruction. But it is not the will of your Father who is in Heaven that one of these little ones should perish. He has given multiplied and unmistakeable proof of His loving interest toward children: "The promise is unto you and to your children." "And these words which I command thee this day shall be in thine heart; and thou shalt teach them diligently to thy children." "Suffer the little children to come unto me." "Feed my lambs." "Bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord."

"Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest." Are there 1,000,000,000 souls in our world that never heard of Jesus and his love, sinning and perishing without law? How, oh, how are they to be saved? By believing the Gospel. But through whom are they to hear the Gospel? The Church, no doubt. But how is the Church to rise to the mighty responsibility? The surest and swiftest way, we verily believe, would be for the Church of Christ to turn the full tide of her life and love and labour on the training of her children in the knowledge and service of Him who makes us our brother's keeper. Then would the redemption of the world draw near. For, would not her children, consecrated to and accepted by Him in infancy, nurtured for Him in the home, watched over and trained by her in school and congregation, grow up strong, wise, pure, self-sacrificing, liberal, full of faith and the Holy Ghost, to go or send at the Master's bidding?

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This work should be well done. The Church and all who engage in her Sabbath Schools should comprehend the true nature and agencies of religious instruction. There should be thorough organization, wise division and regulation of work, and skilful, patient and loving co-operation.

The Assembly of our Church which met in Toronto in 1889, recognizing this, instructed its Sabbath School Committee to prepare a hand-book that might further these ends. It is to be brief, and therefore suggestive rather than exhaustive. The discussion of reasons and principles must of necessity be excluded almost entirely. But for those who desire to make fuller study of the questions involved, a list of authors that may be consulted will be found appended.

It may be well to state further, that the instructions of the Assembly seemed to limit the duty of the Committee to preparing hints on the methods and principles of Sabbath School management and instruction—to the outward and mechanical rather than to the moral and spiritual aspect of the work, towards the furtherance of which they are only instruments, and in true importance always subordinate. It seemed, therefore, no part of the work of the Committee to give prominence to the doctrines of human depravity, redemption through Christ, conversion, the personality and work of the Holy Spirit, etc., etc. The truth and importance of these are rather taken for granted in treating of agencies which are, when wisely employed, to help in making the teaching of these vital doctrines more thorough and efficacious.

THE SABBATH SCHOOL.

What it is.—Its design.—Should exist in every congregation. —How workers are called and improved in efficiency.—Objections answered.

The Sabbath School is a department of the Church, and should be fully under her control. Its design is to co-operate with the godly nurture of the family, and to train in the knowledge and service of God. Its organization, methods and work should be suited to the needs and capacities of those who come under its influence, and to the claims of the Church upon them.

No congregation can be regarded as doing its full duty to its members, especially the children, if it has not a school for their instruction in divine truth, and their training in the service to which all disciples are called. It is, therefore, an instruction of the Assembly to its ministers and missionaries that they use all diligence to organize, at the earliest date possible, a school at every needy centre.

Wherever there are people to be taught, it is clear that the Lord expects his children residing among them to undertake their instruction even though the service they can render is far from perfect. He gives more grace while we are using the grace He has given. Strength comes through use. The idle arm does not increase in strength. God gives a little love, a little strength, a little skill, that in his blessed service the little love may become more love, the little strength more strength, and the little skill greater skill. In God's strength let every child of His do the work laid to his hand, and greater things than these shall he do.

But there are means by which untrained faculties may be improved, and by which yearnings after greater skill and power may be gratified :—

1. If any of you lack wisdom let him ask of God . . . and it shall be given him. Ever seek from Him.
2. Study the Word. It is the Sword of the Spirit.
3. Let there be regular meetings for prayer, study, and conference.
4. If no one trained and experienced in such work can be found in the neighbourhood to take the lead, then procure books and periodicals of a reliable and suitable character, and study them ; and little by little light and strength and blessing will come.

If in new and remote parts of our land workers are unable to provide supplies really necessary, let their circumstances be made known to the convener of their Presbytery's Sabbath School Committee, and no doubt schools in older and better-off neighbourhoods would out of their abundance gladly respond.

Nor is it necessary that one should be a person of leisure or learning to be developed into a skilful worker. God's people are for the most part struggling in daily adversity and toil, but that is even a reason for finding snatches of time for the study of God's Word and for effort in his service, to sweeten toil, lighten care, and bring heaven and its brightness down to earth and its distractions.

ORGANIZATION.

Defined.—Constitution necessary.—It should define ends, means, and agents to reach its ends.—S. S. Association.—Its members and duties.—Subordinate to Session.—Officers.—Superintendent, etc.—Outline Constitution appended.

When a number of persons agree to work together under certain regulations for accomplishing certain purposes, they are said to organize, or form an organization.

When forming a Sabbath School it is necessary to agree upon a constitution which shall define clearly the ends to be reached, and the means to be employed for securing them.

In this the officers to be appointed should be indicated and their duties clearly defined. It should also outline the grading, classification, work, methods and means of efficiency in each department.

To avoid misunderstandings and irregularities, the constitution should be written out or printed, and be brought frequently and fully before the Sabbath School Association.

The Association should consist of the officers and teachers of the school, all of whom should be members of the congregation to which the school belongs, or at least of the Presbyterian Church.

It should have power, subject to the approval of the Session, to elect officers annually, or when vacancies occur, to define their duties, and to carry on the work and business of the school generally.

The superintendent, subject to the approval of the Session and in consultation with the pastor, should have power to appoint, transfer and remove teachers, classify and promote scholars, conduct the general exercises, call meetings, preside, etc.

To avoid repetition and aid in drafting such rules and regulations as are necessary in well-conducted schools, an outline constitution will be found appended. This may be modified to meet special cases.

The officers usually appointed, under the provisions of a constitution, are :—A *Superintendent*, an *Assistant-Superintendent*, a *Secretary-Treasurer* and an *Assistant*, a *Precentor*, an *Organist* and a *Librarian*.

GOVERNMENT.

What we understand by good government.—Direct and indirect.—Which should be adopted.—Causes of failure in Sabbath School government.—Disorder.—Irreverence.—Indirect elements of government.—Influence of officers and teachers.—Course of exercises.—Thorough tactics.—Accommodation.—The place of pains and penalties.

Good government or management consists in carrying out successfully the course of action prescribed by a constitution. In other words, it is the wise and successful administration of any code of laws adopted by an association for the attainment of specific ends. It includes attention to the details of cooperation, the means and efforts to be used in reaching these ends, and also the avoidance or removal of hindrances.

Government may be direct or indirect. Indirect government is exercised through the operations, movements and motives of the governed; direct, by laying down laws with pains and penalties and enforcing the same. Much of the government of a Sabbath School should be carried on indirectly through comfortable, convenient and attractive accommodation; through wise grading, classification and limit of work; through regular, precise and energetic but quiet movements in changing from one exercise to another; through an efficient staff of officers and teachers, who know their duties and who are always on hand in person or by substitute to do their part.

The best constitution may prove unsuccessful through failure in any of these; but in giving tone and character to the government and work of the school, the chief place must be assigned to the Superintendent. If possible, therefore, a man of blameless and exemplary character, a firm, energetic and reliable leader, an enthusiastic, indefatigable, infectious worker should be chosen for superintendent.

A disorderly school cannot be reasonably successful in anything. So important are order and a reverent deportment in Sabbath School that no superintendent should be appointed, who cannot in good measure command these. Disorder and irreverence gnaw the very vitals of Sabbath School work.

Important in making the government of a school successful is the influence of the officers and teachers. They should be heartily loyal to the superintendent and to the requirements of the constitution. Indeed nothing else is consistent with the obligations of their office.

Good government is greatly promoted by a suitable and well-enforced course of exercises or time table, which, in general outline, should be uniform, but in detail, varied occasionally to give freshness and point to the services and work.

Good government is also promoted by a thorough system of tactics. There should be uniformity, precision and promptitude in the general movements of the school from one posture or exercise to another and in dismissing. There should be no between-times. Every minute should have its own appropriate and special duty.

Lastly, good government is greatly promoted by the healthfulness, convenience and attractiveness of the place of meeting.

We have little room in the government of the Sabbath School for pains and penalties. Our government there should be in the spirit of Christian love and faithfulness. [illegible] recognized obstacles to efficiency must be removed, and rebellion in its first appearance must be [illegible] down unhesitatingly. It is better, after due warning, to remo[illegible]ebellious than that the whole camp be troubled or plague-smitten.

CLASS GOVERNMENT.

The Commander.—His staff.—Separate and definite authority.—What the teacher must insist upon.—What he should do to gain authority.—Indirect methods most successful.

In the Sabbath School the superintendent is the commander-in-chief. The teachers and officers are his staff. They and their departments are to obey general orders, but in their own companies these are to be obeyed without question or hesitation, if the whole is to be a unit in work, character and success.

A teacher must, to be useful, insist upon prompt, constant and cheerful obedience to his authority; must have respectful and active attitude and attention during the school session. The wandering eye, the vacant look, the listless attitude, to say nothing of whispering and other gross disorder, must not be tolerated. Upon the teacher rests the responsibility if such insuperable barriers to good work are permitted from week to week. Perfect mastery of self and of lessons, Christian manliness and sanctified common sense must gain and hold sway or the opportunity is lost.

A skilful teacher will seldom call in the authority of the superintendent to supplement his own, but he will find occasion to meet his pupils in their homes and elsewhere; will follow them by correspondence and with constant interest and sympathy till they have learned that he is their true friend to whom they can and will yield loving and constant submission.

The most successful government of a class is secured through indirect and to the scholars unrealized influences. Young people respect one who is perfect master of his subject and himself. They are carried away by one who is wisely enthusiastic. They cease to be indifferent under one who is wholly devoted to his work and his scholars.

A skilful teacher does not *demand* order and seldom if ever makes a threat, but he never falters in his cheerful determination to have order and to do all he has promised. He gives his pupils no time to get into disorder, and wisely awakens ambition to excel other classes in conduct and work.

CLASSIFICATION.

A division of work and workers.—Five grades.—Adult classes should be training classes.—Who should be in one class.—Promotions.—Wise.—Unwise.—Who should promote.—Is dismissal ever necessary?

Classification is such a division of work and workers as secures efficiency and economy of effort and of means with the fullest results. Much is often lost through bad grading and classification.

In most schools there should be five grades:

I. *The Primary* or Infant, composed of children who are unable to read.

II. *The Junior*, composed of scholars able to read and study to a limited extent.

III. *The Intermediate*, classes composed of those who have fair ability to work.

IV. *The Senior* or Youth's Bible Classes, composed of scholars able to study doctrines with proofs in addition to the work of lower grades.

V. *The Adult*, in which Divine Truth in its wider scope, with Church History and Polity, and the general principles of Biblical Interpretation should be made subjects of study.

Adult classes should in good measure be training classes from which regular and substitute teachers could be drawn as required.

Changes in classification should be made only at regular intervals. Promotions from the primary to the junior grade may be necessary half-yearly or even quarterly; but from grades higher than the primary yearly promotions should be sufficient. Otherwise exact and full reporting will be rendered difficult.

Scholars of nearly the same age, capacity, character and attainments, should have similar work assigned under teachers most competent in such work. To this there may be necessary exceptions.

Where a teacher and his scholars have made marked progress and coöperate cordially, it would be well at suitable times to promote together to a higher grade.

Promotions on any fictitious grounds, not on real merit, will result in evil.

Teachers who, after full opportunity, fail to awaken to a reasonable extent the sympathy and coöperation of their scholars, or who are frequently late or absent, should be dealt with privately and faithfully. When matters do not, after that, improve, the superintendent should transfer to other classes or work—if not, remove.

WORK.

The law and example of work.—Work in the Sabbath School.—Why so little is accomplished in some.—Scriptural guidance as to work, etc.—Who can teach successfully.—Coöperation between home and church.—How to reach the true end of life.—A travesty of the Sabbath School.—Proportion of time given to secular and sacred studies.—The Catechism.—Training in reverent worship—in Christian endeavour.

Work is a condition of health and development in the moral and spiritual as well as in the animal kingdom. The Master, forgetful of self, went about continually doing good, and He has called all His disciples to follow His example. No follower of His should sit with folded hands. The Son of Man has given "to every man his work." This is true in the congregation. Every member should have a place in the work of hastening the kingdom of Christ.

This principle should extend to the Sabbath School. If the officers and teachers work, so should the scholars. Yet there are schools, and we fear there are many, in which nothing is expected of the scholars but attendance—no home study, no memorizing. When such scholars do attend they are, at best, indifferent and are entirely lacking in that self-activity which is an essential factor in true learning.

Until parents and children realize that home work and preparation for Sabbath School are as important as study and preparation for public school or college, the good accomplished in such schools will be small indeed.

A few passages from the many in God's Word dealing with the training of the young will lead us to understand the work, methods, workers and objects of the Sabbath School: "And these words which I command thee this day shall be in thine heart; and thou shalt teach them diligently to thy children." "I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord to do justice and judgment." "Ye fathers provoke not your chil-

dren to wrath, but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it." From such passages we are directed as to :

The Matter to be taught—"These words which I command thee."

The Teacher—"Thou"—"Fathers"—Parents—God's People.

The Taught—"His children and his household."

The End—"That they may keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment."

The Method—"Thou shalt teach." From the context we understand that this method was interlocutory—teaching by asking and answering questions.

To teach the Word successfully it should be known experimentally and in its completeness so that divine truths shall be taught in their relation to each other and to the whole truth.

Fathers cannot be relieved of their responsibility to nurture their children, but the Church has a duty and an important one, too. When both work together in full and loving accord we may expect all her children to be taught of the Lord.

The instruction of the household in the home is surely one of the highest privileges and most imperative duties of Christian parents, and too much prominence cannot be given to this oft neglected duty, neglected to the unspeakable loss of all in the family ; but when households go from home study and worship to school study and worship we may look for such enlargement and blessing on the Sabbath School as has hardly yet entered into our fondest hopes.

When, by full instruction in the home, in the school and in the house of God, our youth learn to know that the great and satisfying end of life is "to keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment," the vain, fevered struggle after riches and fame will give place to the blessed serving of God in holiness and righteousness, to lofty purpose and service, to universal peace and good will.

The school should expect daily preparation of its work in the home and under its loving supervision. The hurried memorizing of some passage just before or at school is nothing short of a mockery, a travesty on the true study and work of the school. Parents and teachers should coöperate in careful instruction as to the meaning of the lesson, then in its accurate memorizing, a portion each day. First in the home, then at the school, that work should be tested and enlarged. Such work, wisely associated with home life and home worship, could hardly become a drudgery, but would, on the contrary, become attractive and strongly formative of character.

While parents are agreed with secular teachers that from five to seven hours a day devoted to secular knowledge is not unreasonable, it must seem eminently reasonable that at least half an hour a day should be devoted to the study of saving truth. Nay, that length of time seems unreasonably short for work so momentous.

The Shorter Catechism, that wonderful epitome of divine truth, should be studied similarly in all grades except the primary and in every school of our Church.

When all her children are thus trained the Church will be mighty in the Scriptures and able to cope with the unbelief and error of the world.

An important duty of the school, not secondary to that of teaching the truth, is the training of the young to habits of reverent and sincere worship in all services of school and congregation, and to habits of punctuality and regularity in attendance thereat.

The school should, by wise and discriminating methods, train the young in regular, systematic, Christian endeavour on behalf of others. No one is too young to serve and make sacrifice for the Master. Effort strengthens. Idleness, buried talents, must bring the guilt and the penalty of the slothful and wicked.

SYSTEMATIC GIVING.

Christ's commendation.—His ordination.—His command.—The highest incentive.—Duty of giving as binding as duty of praying.—Blessing of liberality.—Curse of withholding.—Why the young should be educated to give.—True faith and love will have fruits.—Children have little to give.—When they have, the blessing increased.—When they will delight to give.—Weekly offerings, how they may be established.—Schemes and Missions frequently before the school.—Birthday offerings.—What our schools did in 1888.—What they might soon do.—The chief reason for training the young in Christian giving.

If the Lord commended the widow's gift out of her penury for the support of the temple service, there can be no doubt that every gift, however small, given by a true heart for the support of Gospel ordinances and the extension of His kingdom meets with His approval and brings His blessing. He has "ordained that they which preach the Gospel should live of the Gospel ;" and has charged His Church to go and "teach all nations." To the rich young man he said : "Go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven." We thus see that God's worship is to be supported, His kingdom extended and the poor relieved. These claims are always with us, and when we think of the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, who became poor that we through His poverty might be rich, and remember that even a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple shall be rewarded, we have abundant incentive as His followers, as His stewards, to abound in this grace also.

No member of His Church questions the duty of *love*, of *faith*, of *service* towards our Lord Jesus Christ ; but many church members do practically deny that they are under obligation *to give* to Him out of their abundance or out of their deep poverty. Yet no duty is more clearly laid down in His

Word and no richer reward is offered than to those who from love of Him seek to relieve His suffering ones.

Giving is a duty, a privilege, an act of worship that all should render according as they have been prospered. It is a service the rendering of which brings enlargement of means as well as of soul; and the withholding of which tends only to poverty of soul and poverty of purse. God's liberality to us is conditioned upon our liberality towards Him in material and spiritual service. "Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed Me. . . . In tithes and offerings."

How fitful, how fickle, how grudging the giving of many is, God knows. Be it ours to instruct the young in the principles and practice of giving to the Lord regularly, systematically, cheerfully, liberally, that there may be meat in His house, that there may be gladness and singleness of heart, and that He may open the windows of heaven and pour out blessings upon their liberated and liberal souls that there shall not be room enough to receive it.

When children are taught to pray and praise as an act of worship, they should be taught that giving is an act of worship equally acceptable and well pleasing in God's sight. When they are taught that without praying they cannot expect His blessing, they should be taught that without giving to the Lord they cannot expect His richest blessing. They should be taught that real faith and love must show themselves in appropriate and real services and sacrifices. A soul always asking and making no return for benefits received must be selfishly confined; while the liberal soul asking that it may have to give and serve is made fat.

It is true that most children have little of their own to lay upon the Lord's altar. But God will accept his own from the parents through their children, and will bless both when offered by them "in uprightness of heart."

When children are able to earn, and by self-denial save what is their own, there will come in the giving of it to the Lord a heightened pleasure and a fuller blessing.

When their hearts are consecrated and liberal their ingenuity and perseverance in providing offerings for their loved Saviour will require little other stimulus than the consciousness that his words "It is more blessed to give than to receive," are verified in their happy experience.

In harmony with these views the Assembly recommends a simple system of WEEKLY OFFERINGS to the Schemes of the Church in all our schools. In the authorized class-books a space for entering such offering is provided. Where these books are not yet in use a simple weekly offering card may be used with excellent results. Such a card should have the name of the school and space for the number of the class for a heading. Horizontally it should be ruled with spaces for the teacher's and scholars' names and the weekly total. Perpendicularly there should be spaces for five Sabbaths in each of the three months of a quarter and one for the total. Some scholar of the class may be entrusted with the duty of collecting and entering the offerings of each scholar. During the session the treasurer collects and gives the total to the superintendent who at the close announces the amount offered for the day.

In addition to the interest awakened and sustained in this way, it is recommended that special attention be called once a month to one or other of the Schemes of the Church, to mission fields and work, and to the victories and hindrances of the Gospel.

A Sabbath School library, well supplied with biographies of missionaries and works on missions, will be a further means of education in the claims of the Lord's work.

A Birthday Offering Box, into which all connected with the school should be invited to drop at least one cent for each year of their age on their birthday, would help to educate to a grateful recognition of a watchful providence guarding and blessing our lives.

During 1888, the schools of the Church raised for all purposes the sum of $65,560. Out of this, $23,143 were expended in supporting the school themselves; $28,324 on missions; and $14,093 on other objects. Had all congregations borne the expenses of their schools, as recommended by the Assembly, and all their contributions been given to the Schemes of the Church, her funds would have been increased by $37,236,—enough to have supported 30 missionaries in the foreign field for one year.

Had the 132,208 scholars and the 14,850 officers and teachers enrolled that year given on an average one cent a Sabbath to the schemes, the amount would have been over $75,000. Not a few schools, with no system but the open collection, average that amount. With a weekly offering system some are doubling that average, giving over one dollar a year for all enrolled, and there would be little difficulty in raising the average to three cents, or more than $225,000 a year from the schools of our Church.

Important, however, as the amount that could be [illegible] may seem, the training given during childhood and youth in the principles and practice of [illegible] giving is far more important, just as the principal advantage of early training in any department of education is realized in the maturity and fruitfulness of after years.

REGISTRATION.

Exact and reliable accounts essential in business.—Full records important in Sabbath School work.—Decline in ambition and effort.—Exact information to be used to stimulate the school.—Parents.—Objection answered.—A means of home and school cooperation.—Full registration and reporting needed for the courts of the Church.—How reporting may be made more satisfactory.—Motto cards.—Registration labour well spent.

An exact, reliable and exhaustive statement of resources, of income, expenditure, gains and losses is necessary to the efficient working of any enterprise. Business men know the value of a thorough system of book-keeping. It is the key to the situation.

Of very great importance is it to know the exact condition of a school and of every department and class in it. By a judicious use of statistics from week to week and from quarter to quarter, the attendance, work, giving and spirit of a school may be improved in a marked degree. The grade or class, even the individual most negligent of duty, may be ascertained and quickened.

Where facts are not known and used in this way a school must sink in ambition, work and spirit, while a full recognition of effort and merit is a great stimulus to higher merit and effort.

Though the superintendent and officers have and use such exact information in and for the good of the school it should not stop here. Parents should be put in possession of exact information respecting the condition of the whole school, but especially respecting their own children—their attendance, deportment, work, giving, etc.

Let no one object that this would be bringing our schools to the level of secular schools. If the work of secular schools is more efficiently carried out that is but a contrast which puts our Sabbath teaching and work to shame. To adopt means of efficiency, so long as they have no tendency to secularize, is highly creditable from whatever source they may be obtained. But to inform Christian parents of the work and progress of their children in Sabbath school by interview or written report, or both, is the Christian duty of every teacher; and most parents will welcome such information as an excellent means of cooperation between the home and the school.

In addition to the value of exact and full registration of school statistics in and for the school and home, such registration is necessary that Presbyteries, Synods and Assembly may deal with Sabbath schools as their importance demands. Though careful and exact registration has been enjoined for years and forms for that purpose have been sent out, the returns have been shamefully imperfect and vague in not a few cases. Thus, to a large extent, the hands of the Courts have been tied by the indifference of officers and teachers who failed to keep records as required by the Church. Matters are improving—fuller and more reliable statistics are coming in year by year. But why every school should not keep its records as is obviously best for the school and also for general purposes seems unaccountable, except on the supposition that the matter has not been made sufficiently prominent. Pastors and superintendents should give special attention to registration till it is perfect.

Let there be a full record of name, age and residence of every scholar. For each day record:—Attendance at school and church, verses memorized, questions in Catechism memorized, proofs of doctrine given from memor. and amount of offering. An exact summary of these should be made and recorded each quarter and announced in the school. Then at the end of the year the secretary could place full and reliable information in the hands of all to whom he should report.

An excellent incentive to future regularity and good work would be found in the use of a neat motto card for the coming year, having on the back a space for the name of the scholar, his attendance, his verses, questions in Catechism and proofs memorized during the year just closed, and any other item specially deserving acknowledgment.

The labour involved in such registration and reporting, though considerable, will be fruitful as a means of efficiency in every department.

TEACHING.

Teachers should study their art.—What teaching is not.—What it is.—What learning is.—No learning, no teaching.—The most successful.—Conditions of success.—"The approach."—Results assured by Him who cannot lie.

To be successful as teachers we need to have some adequate understanding of what is involved in teaching; and with that knowledge we need experience in the practice of its duties. Many Sabbath school teachers would do far more successful work were they to read some book on the art of teaching simply to understand some of the leading principles underlying the work they are attempting to do in the dark.

Preaching is different in method from teaching. Lecturing or telling is not teaching. Hearing recitations is not teaching. Following a text book with question and answer is not teaching.

To teach is so to arouse the faculties of the scholars that they lay hold of and assimilate the truth presented to them. In the highest kind of learning the learner sees the truth clearly and so lays hold of it that it becomes a part of his mental and moral equipment, and then he reduces it to practice in his life.

If this be true, strictly speaking, there can be no real teaching where there is no real learning; and there is no learning except through the self-activity of the learner.

The most successful teacher is, therefore, the one who is most skilful in arousing, directing, and keeping up the self-activity of his scholars.

To be successful in this fullest sense a teacher must know clearly the truth he wishes to be learned. He must know his scholars, their character, capacity and surroundings. He must be skilful in adopting the best way of presenting a truth. And he must know how to arouse and sustain hearty cooperation on the part of his scholars.

Success in teaching depends greatly upon *the approach* of the teacher to his class and lesson. If he fail in his approach there is a probability of failure throughout. There should, therefore, be skilful preparation and watchful ingenuity in the matter of the first word, look, question, attitude, gesture. All eyes, ears and minds should, if possible, be arrested and held from the beginning.

Aiming always at the highest standard, and following closely the example, and seeking constantly the presence and promised help of Him who gives the commission, let no teacher despair even in the hour of greatest discouragement, "He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed shall *doubtless* come again rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him."

TEACHERS' MEETINGS.

Essential to highest efficiency.—What should be done before the meeting.—What should not be done at the meeting.—What should be done.—Normal work to a limited extent may be done.—Business meetings.—Prayer meeting an auxiliary to Teachers' meeting.—When these meetings are no failure.—Meetings in rural districts.

A weekly teachers' meeting is essential to the highest efficiency of a Sabbath School.

The first study of the lesson should not take place at this meeting. That should be thoroughly done by every teacher and officer before the teachers' meeting. Neither should the meeting be conducted as a Bible Class. The main teachings of the lesson should be developed, and real difficulties discussed rapidly. With the special condition of the school, or of some classes, or special circumstances, clearly in view, let the best method of presenting the lesson, or some section of the lesson, with apt illustrations suitable for the various grades and classes, be agreed upon. There should be free interchange of thought and experience in regard to study, teaching, personal dealing with scholars at school, in their homes, or elsewhere. Special cases of interest or difficulty should form the subject of conversation and prayer.

No fixed mode of conducting a teachers' meeting should be followed. The lecturing and speech-making style should have no place; nor should formality and routine. Christian sincerity, frankness, cordiality and charity, should characterize the meeting from the opening to the close; and when this is the case the most timid will be led into taking a part. In no other circumstances will the staff be so knit together, become of one heart and mind, and be so well fitted for success in the school.

It becomes practicable and highly advantageous, when the teachers' meeting can be held in an evening by itself, to devote a limited time to normal work, discussion and drill, on the principles and methods of study and teaching. Excellent and inexpensive text-books could be procured and studied chapter by chapter as time and circumstances justified. Too much should not be attempted, but a little of such work would undoubtedly improve and strengthen those who took part in it.

The business matters of a school should never be neglected, yet to discuss them frequently at teachers' meeting is damaging to the tone and work which should prevail; and it is recommended that as far as possible the last meeting of each quarter take the character of a business and social one. A small committee should be authorized to deal with special business requiring early attention.

As a rule the most convenient time for the teachers' meeting is at the close of the regular weekly prayer meeting. Some pastors, at this, deal in a practical and devotional way with the lesson of the coming Sabbath. This awakens interest and sympathy in the congregation toward the Sabbath School, and helps to expedite the work of the meeting at its close. The devotional portion of the exercises should give place to nothing. There is no fear of failure in these meetings when those present can say, "Lord, it is good for us to be here."

To hold meetings successfully in rural districts is more difficult than in towns and villages; yet even there such meetings with workers fully alive to their importance, have been and are carried on with great advantage.

ACCOMMODATION.

In the Church.—Its disadvantages.—Success more remarkable.—Accommodation may be modified with advantage.—Fitting and furnishing should be modified.—Suggestions for building separate school rooms.—General shape.—Arrangement of classes.—Seating, etc.—Advantages of school-whole exercises.—Maps and illustrations.—Blackboards.

Most Sabbath Schools are of necessity conducted in churches, the arrangements of which are usually quite unsuitable for school purposes. Those who have succeeded in making Sabbath School work successful in spite of uncomfortable seating, bad ventilation, crowding all classes into the same room, and other drawbacks, deserve the highest commendation. In addition to the qualifications of teachers successful in ordinary circumstances, they have had the valuable one of skill to overcome the effects of serious hindrances.

Since the great majority of our schools must continue to meet in churches, we would urge upon those who have it in their power to so modify existing arrangements that while the congregational needs will not be put to inconvenience, the Sabbath School may be carried on under fewer hardships and hindrances.

It is recommended that, where new churches are being erected, special consideration be given to the seating and arranging of classes. Seats comfortable for half grown boys and girls would not be uncomfortable for adults, and less so for children. It would be well to have a reversible chair in the centre of every alternate seat. The space at one or both sides of the pulpit might be so furnished that on Sabbath the seating could be changed to suit an infant or Bible class. Then, with inexpensive curtains to shut in the class while at class work, much would be gained. It is of great importance to keep the air of the church pure and the temperature even. Where galleries exist it should not be difficult by sliding doors or curtains to convert both the spaces over and under the gallery into class rooms.

In the construction of separate school rooms, much attention should be given to the lighting, heating and ventilation. The neglect of any of these will materially increase the difficulties of teaching and management. Basement schools, as a rule, are very defective in one or more of these respects—sometimes in all.

A school house should be so planned that as many classes as possible shall be isolated during the time of class-work proper, and yet during the opening and closing exercises the entire space shall become one auditorium by the withdrawing of doors and curtains. Only thus can a school, as a whole, share in the unifying, stimulating, edifying power of general exercises.

A building of the amphitheatre style, with semi-circular gallery, having the superintendent's desk as the centre, would make such an arrangement practicable.

Infant classes should be accommodated near the superintendent—on his right and left. Youth's and adult Bible classes should follow in the order of their age, size, etc., so that the nearer should not intercept the vision of the more remote. Junior and intermediate classes would occupy the central space of the room.

The seating should insure comfort and make good teaching possible. Seats in semi-circular form, or three sides of an octagon, with the teacher in the focus so that all the class would be equally under his eye and voice, would be of great advantage. A desk or stand, with drawer, beside each teacher's chair would be a valuable convenience.

Maps and illustrations of a suitable kind should be provided. A good blackboard should never be wanting on the superintendent's platform and in each class-room. Very simple, even unartistic and rude blackboard work, if to the point, will materially help in securing attention and fixing thought.

APPENDICES.

CONSTITUTION AND REGULATIONS OF THE .....PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH SABBATH SCHOOL.

I.

The name of this school shall be THE.....PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH SABBATH SCHOOL.

II.

It shall be under the control of the Session of the.....Presbyterian Congregation as a branch of its congregation and work.

III.

1. There shall be an Association called THE.....PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH S. S. ASSOCIATION and it shall be composed of all holding office as follows :—

An Honorary Superintendent,
Superintendent,
Assistant Superintendent,
Secretary,
Assistant Secretary,
Treasurer,
Assistant Treasurer,
Librarian,
Assistant Librarian,
Absentee Officer or Officers,
Precentor, Organist,
Recruiting Officer or Officers,
Teachers,
Alternate or Substitute Teachers.

2. This Association shall administer the affairs of the school generally under the limitations of other sections of this constitution.

3. There shall be weekly, quarterly, annual and special meetings of this Association. *The Weekly Meetings*, except as hereinafter provided, shall be held for prayer, praise, the study of the lesson, mutual improvement, encouragement and co-operation, and also for the transaction of business which may require attention.

The quarterly meeting shall be held in the last week of each quarter and may be of a business or social character, or of both, as may be determined by the Association.

The last meeting of the year shall be the *Annual Meeting*, at which reports shall be received and disposed of from Secretary, Treasurer, Auditors, Librarian and other Officers or Committees whose duty it may be, by order of the Association, to report. But it shall be competent for the Association to call the Annual Meeting at an earlier date in December.

4. All officers, except Teachers and Alternate Teachers, shall be appointed annually, by ballot, and shall hold office till their successors are appointed or until their appointment has been disallowed by the Session. But any vacancy may be filled at any meeting if notice has been given at the next previous meeting or at the next preceding regular session of the Sabbath School.

5. Any other business necessary to the efficiency of the School may also be transacted at the annual meeting.

IV.

The School shall consist of five departments, Primary, Junior, Intermediate, Senior and Adult; and the following shall be the mode of classification subject to such modification as the superintendent may consider judicious:—

1. The Primary shall include all unable to read.
2. The Junior shall consist of those able to read and learn to a limited extent.
3. The Intermediate shall include all able to read and study with reasonable facility.
4. In the Senior there may be Boys' and Girls' Bible Classes, in which more careful instruction shall be given in the doctrines of the Bible or the tenets of the Church than should be attempted in the other departments.
5. The Adult in which, in addition to Senior work, Church history, doctrine and polity may be studied to limited extent.
6. A Missionary Society may be formed for the whole school or for each department at the discretion and under the control of the Association. And the money raised by the school for mission purposes shall be allocated by a vote of the school on the recommendation of the Sabbath School Association.

V.

Officers and their duties:

1. The Honorary Superintendent shall be the Pastor of the Church.

2. The Superintendent shall be a member of the Congregation.

(*a*) He shall appoint the teachers. It shall be his duty to assign them classes, and transfer when necessary and agreeable, from one class to another.

(*b*) He shall, in consultation with the Association, control the organization, classification and government of the School.

(*c*) He shall take charge of the School and conduct its general exercises in person, or by substitutes on whom he may call when present.

(*d*) He shall act as Chairman at all meetings of the Association or name one to occupy the chair.

(*e*) He shall have power to call for special reports from officers (or teachers) when the interests of the School, in his judgment, require such. He may also call special meetings of the Association, announcing at same time the purpose for which the said meeting is called.

(*f*) It shall be his duty, in case of frequent absence of a teacher, to take steps to have his place permanently filled by a teacher who can attend regularly.

(*g*) He shall give timely notice of prospective absence to Assistant Superintendent.

3. Assistant Superintendent shall be a member of the Presbyterian Church. It shall be the duty of the Assistant Superintendent, who may be a teacher, to render such assistance to the Superintendent as shall most conduce to the efficiency of the School, and, in his absence, take his place and discharge his duties.

4. (*a*) Those who have classes permanently assigned to them in any department shall be called Teachers; and those who are appointed to take the place of absent teachers, or to take charge of classes temporarily without teachers, shall be called Alternate or Substitute Teachers.

(*b*) All Teachers and Substitute Teachers shall be members of the congregation or of some other Presbyterion congregation.

(*c*) It shall be the duty of Teachers (of both classes) to attend the regular meetings of the School and when consistent with other duties, to attend all meetings of the Association, and by every means in their power to render the work of the School and Association most effectual.

This will involve careful preparation for all known duties, and readiness to respond to all reasonable calls of the Association and Superintendent.

It will also include the maintenance of order in their classes as well as careful teaching, registration of residence, work, contributions, etc., in their classes, in harmony with the system adopted by the Association.

And it will include timely notice of prospective absence and arrangements for Substitutes.

5. It shall be the duty of Substitutes or Alternate Teachers to attend the sessions of the School, to take the place of absent teachers, and otherwise assist in the work of the School.

6. Secretary. (*a*) It shall be the duty of the Secretary to be present at all meetings of the Association, to keep in a suitable minute book provided by the Association, correct minutes of the proceedings of the Association at all its meetings, and to bring said minute book duly written up to all meetings of the Association.

(*b*) To prepare and lay before the Superintendent or Association, weekly, quarterly or annual statements, as may be required, with regard to attendance, withdrawals, recitations, etc.

(*c*) To produce, when required by the Association, all minutes, documents, etc., that may be in his possession.

(*d*) To order, receive and distribute promptly under instructions from the Association, supplies of helps, class books, hymn books, etc.

(*e*) To act as usher at opening and closing of school and at other meetings when necessary.

(*f*) It shall be one of the special duties of the Secretary in case of his being unable to be present at any meeting, to notify the Assistant Secretary to attend, and to hand to him the minute book and such other books, statements or papers, as may be required by the special circumstances of the meeting.

7. Assistant Secretary. It shall be the duty of the Assistant Secretary to assist in all the responsibilities and work of the Secretary, and, in his absence, to discharge his duties.

8. The Treasurer. (*a*) It shall be the duty of the Treasurer to take charge and keep separate and regular accounts of collections, contributions, offerings and special funds given or raised by or in behalf of the School or any of its schemes or departments or of the Association, also of expenditures.

(*b*) To prepare and lay before the Superintendent, Auditors or Association, weekly, monthly, quarterly and annual statements, as may be required with regard to financial matters.

(*c*) To expend money only on the order of the Association or of the person authorized by it to order payment.

(*d*) To produce when required by the Association all accounts, vouchers, bank books, etc., that may be in his possession.

(*e*) It shall be one of the special duties of the Treasurer in case of his necessary absence from a prospective meeting at which financial interests may require his services, to notify the Assistant Treasurer and hand to him the accounts, books, documents which may be needed at such meeting.

9. Assistant Treasurer. It shall be the duty of the Assistant Treasurer to assist in all the work and responsibilities of the Treasurer, and, in his absence, to discharge his duties.

10. Librarian. (*a*) It shall be the duty of the Librarian to purchase and have in his keeping in suitable cases (provided by the Association) and to circulate such books as the Association or its authorized representatives may direct.

(*b*) To prepare and have printed from time to time, as may be required by the Association, catalogues of the library, for the use of the school and others in the congregation.

(*c*) To report annually, or oftener as may be required by the Association, the number of books in the library, their condition, the number circulated, and necessary changes in the mode of circulating, character and supply of books.

11. The Assistant Librarian (*a*) shall aid the Librarian in all reponsibilities and work; and in his absence discharge his duties.

(*b*). It shall be the duty of both to act as ushers and orderlies when necessary.

12. Leaders of singing. (*a*) There shall be a Precentor and Organist, whose duty it shall be to do all in their power to render the service of praise in the school efficient and profitable.

13. Absentee Officers (being members or adherents of the Presbyterian Church) may be appointed, whose duty it shall be to ascertain, without loss of time, the cause of absence of scholars whose name and residence the teachers shall hand to the Secretary immediately after the opening of the school each Sabbath.

14. Recruiting Officers (being members or adherents of the Presbyterian Church) may be appointed, whose duty it shall be, in addition to what can be done by teachers and other officers, to canvas all alotted districts and incomers for the puprose of bringing into the membership of the school all who are not identified with any other.

15. Two Auditors shall be appointed annually, or as occasion may require, whose duty it shall be to examine and report on the condition of all books. accounts, vouchers, etc., connected with the income and expenditure of the School or Association.

VI.

Alterations in this Constitution may be made at the Annual Meeting, or any regular meeting, by a majority of the Association, provided notice of proposed change shall have been given by any two members, in writing, to the Superintendent, and read by him at the last preceding meeting, and also at the last preceding regular session of the school.

In cases where neither the Honorary Superintendent, the Superintendent, or Assistant Superintendent are present at a meeting of the Association, then the meeting shall appoint its own Chairman *pro tem.* in the ordinary manner.

And in cases where neither the Secretary or the Assistant Secretary is present at a meeting of the Association, then the meeting shall appoint its own Secretary *pro tem.*

Weekly Meetings shall be held on such day of each week and at such hour as may be decided upon except as hereinafter provided.

Quarterly Meetings shall be held instead of the weekly meeting on the last weeks of March, June, September and December, and the last Quarterly Meeting of the year shall be the Annual Meeting of the Association, unless the Association change the time of meeting.

PARTIAL LIST OF BOOKS HELPFUL FOR REFERENCE OR STUDY TO SABBATH SCHOOL TEACHERS.

Trumbull's "Teaching and Teachers."	Philadelphia: John D. Wattles.
" Yale Lectures on "The Sunday School."	" " "
Morrison's "Sabbath School Teachers' Hand-Book."	London: Sunday School Union.
Joseph Payne's "Science and Art of Education."	New York: E. L. Kellogg & Co.
J. G. Fitch's "Lectures on Teaching."	" McMillan & Co.
Baldwin's "Art of School Management."	Toronto: Warwick & Sons.
Quick's "Educational Reformers."	Cincinnatti: R. Clarke & Co.
Dr. J. H. Vincent's "Modern Sunday School."	New York: Phillips & Hunt.
J. A. Lyons', "The Sunday School and its Methods."	Nashville: Methodist Publishing House.
Dr. J. M. Gregory's "Seven Laws of Teaching."	Boston: Congregational Publishing House.
" Preparing to Teach."	Philadelphia: Presbytery Board.
Dr. Worden's "Normal Class Outline."	" "
W. H. Groser's "Young Teacher."	London: Sunday School Union.
" " "Sabbath School Teacher's Manual."	" " " "
R. G. Pardee's "Sabbath School Index."	Philadelphia: J. C. Garrigus & Co.
Frank Beard's "Blackboard in the Sabbath School."	New York: Excelsior Publishing House.
Dr. Craft's "Plain Uses of the Blackboard and Slate."	" Ward & Drummond.
J. G. Fitch's "Art of Questioning." (Pamphlet.)	London: Sunday School Union.
" " "Art of Securing Attention." "	" " " "
" " "Art of Teaching in a S. School"	" " " "

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